



“The proliferation of illegal and unsafe multi-family boarding and rooming houses in single-family homes threatens the very foundation of our suburban life and the safety of its occupants and emergency first-responders who are called to these locations. These illegal dwellings can be eliminated only if all levels of government work together in a non-partisan and cooperative manner.”

HARVEY B. LEVINSON

Chairman, Nassau County Board of Assessors

SUMMARY OF INITIATIVES

TO

COMBAT ILLEGAL MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS

- **Reclassify illegal four-family, boarding or rooming houses from Class 1 (Residential) to Class 4 (Commercial) for taxation purposes. On average, the commercial property tax rate is 2 ½ times higher than the residential rate.**
- **Towns, cities and villages should amend their codes to permit penalties for illegal housing to include fines against landlords equaling two times the monthly rent collected.**
- **Since rents are usually collected in cash, report violators to Internal Revenue Service for further action.**
- **Advise insurance companies, since most policies were written for single-family use.**
- **Amend the petition filed in the landlord/tenant part of the Nassau County District Court to include an affirmation of apartment's legal status.**
- **Deny back rent payments to landlords, if apartment is illegal.**
- **NYS Department of State should be more proactive and impose penalties on real estate agents and brokers who take illegal apartment listings.**
- **Require LIPA to create a form requiring homeowners to explain their reason for the need for additional meter service. Once the form is received by the utility, it should be forwarded to the towns for further investigation.**
- **Presumptive evidence of illegal rentals – Sanitation workers can identify houses with consistently large amounts of garbage.**
- **Create a rental occupancy permit (similar to the one used in the Town of North Hempstead). If a property owner cannot produce the permit, a claim cannot be pursued in court.**
- **24-hour on-call inspection by town building inspectors.**
- **Emergency Response Report to be utilized by all fire departments and police precincts to report unsafe living conditions.**
- **District Attorney assisting the towns in prosecuting most egregious cases.**
- **Drain on school district resources. Coordinated effort between the towns and school districts in providing proper zoning information to identify illegal multi-family dwellings. Department of Assessment would serve as intermediary of information.**
- **Change local zoning to allow mixed-use development in downtown areas.**
- **Empower the fire marshal with the ability to close down illegal boarding and rooming houses.**